extraordinary experiences one would otherwise never have. Getting to spend time with the men and women who have made law enforcement their life's work—the officers, the sheriffs, and others—is one such extraordinary experience, and it always humbles me to witness their courage and dedication up close. They work long hours away from their families, often at great personal risk, and endure low salaries and years of stress at work and at home to make our lives safer and easier. And I, for one, wish to acknowledge the men and women of the Memphis Police Department, and all law enforcement personnel in Tennessee and across America, for the selfless work they do.

We who work every day in this symbol of democracy are fortunate, because we get to know the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police on a personal basis. We greet them every day, we witness their dedication to duty, they inquire after us and our families, they become our friends. Long after Officers Gibson and Chestnut were laid to rest, we remember still their warmth and their many kindnesses, their lives and their heroic sacrifice. Unfortunately, other officers with just as much courage and dedication to duty are not known by the people they protect. But that does not mean they should be appreciated any less.

And it is not just the people of their communities who should appreciate them. As the representatives of those people in Washington, we also must recognize America's police men and women for what they are—American heros—and do whatever we can to support their efforts on our behalf.

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GLOBAL DISASTER INFORMATION NETWORK

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to commend employees of the many Federal departments and agencies responsible for the impressive preliminary work on establishing a Global Disaster Information Network, GDIN.

As a member of the Governmental Affairs Committee, which authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, I take a keen interest in the way in which institutions in the federal government respond to disasters. I am struck by the tremendous potential advanced technologies, including satellite imaging, the Worldwide Web, and computer data systems can play in improving our responsiveness to natural disasters.

Much of the credit is due to the visionary leadership of Vice President GORE for directing GDIN's development and for recognizing the potential for harnessing current day technologies in an unprecedented and innovative way.

GDIN represents a coordinated effort among the Nation's federal disaster agencies, intelligence agencies, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, academia, and industry, and their international counterparts, to utilize existing and emerging information technology more effectively to provide key decision makers with information critical for reducing loss from natural disasters. As a result of GDIN, the availability of critical disaster response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness information is now greater than ever before.

Domestic disasters are estimated to cost an average of $54.3 billion, causing 510 deaths per year. International disasters kill more than 133,000 people and cost more than $440 billion in property damage. The added costs of widespread human suffering and political instability are incalculable.

The current capabilities of GDIN are impressive, but future capabilities and possibilities hold even greater promise. GDIN's development exemplifies the best international collaborative efforts between government and industry and illustrates the innovation possible only in this great technological age. Surprisingly, GDIN has received scant attention by the American public or the media.

Prior to GDIN, there was no common approach to accessing a single source for the broad range of information needed for natural disaster reduction or aids to help integrate information from many diverse sources. Relevant information was difficult to locate or use effectively. Disaster managers worldwide were consistently frustrated by poor telecommunications and inadequate infrastructure.

In February 1997, Vice President GORE wrote to key Federal departments and agencies requesting a feasibility study for establishing a global disaster information network, through the integration of the Internet and other emerging technologies, to improve preparedness and responsiveness to natural or environmental disasters. A Federal task force was formed to explore public/private partnerships to make the concept a reality. In April 2000, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13151, formally creating GDIN and setting operational objectives.

A key objective of GDIN is to promote the United States as an example and leader in the development and dissemination of disaster information, both domestically and abroad, and to seek cooperation with foreign governments and international organizations. Continued Federal leadership is essential to its continued success. The creation of a highly sophisticated and widely distributed knowledge base, encompassing common systems of measurements, methods of data visualization and exploitation, information analysis, event forecasting, knowledge modeling, and data and information management, remains key to successful future development.

For example, in 1997, the region of Grand Forks, North Dakota suffered losses greater than $400 million when the Red River rose. In order to predict flood areas accurately, we need a system that can overlay information not only on water levels and rates but also the surrounding infrastructure of levies and roads, which affect the flow of water.

A positive example of data integration was in the 1996 fire in Mendocino, California, in which data from the Landsat Thematic Mapper, Digital Elevation Models, infrared scanners, information from National Technical Means, and field reports were used to assess fire damage, as well as the potential for erosion and new growth. Additional information on rangeland, wildlife habitats, and recreational needs were included to build a comprehensive plan for re-vegetation resulting in a plan by the U.S. Forest Service, which is estimated to have saved $250 million by more efficient planting.

These are isolated examples. The program, both nationally and internationally, is still in its infancy. The information is there but the way to access it is still a work in progress. Unfortunately, on the domestic front there has been a lack of support in some circles for this program. Such lack of support is deplorable. The need to find more effective ways to respond to disasters in the United States must be above partisan politics.

We live in truly amazing times. Rapid improvements in communications, the Internet, space imagery, remote sensing, global positioning technologies, and early warning forecasting hold promise to continue to revolutionize disaster management and therefore save lives and reduce human suffering in very significant ways.

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ORGANIZED LABOR AND PNTR—NOT A MONOLITHIC APPROACH

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, a week ago I met with a national workforce coalition of unions that came out in support of establishing Permanent Normal Trading Relations with China. I had encountered some of the labor leaders who belong to this coalition on several other occasions, including at the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia in August. I simply rise today to note for my colleagues that organized labor in this country is not monolithic in their views on such matters as trade and protectionism.

The members of the coalition I met with last week came primarily from the aerospace industry in the Pacific Northwest, building the jet airplanes, engines, and other aerospace subsystems that are competing globally with the likes of Europe's Airbus. However, I have previously met members of this coalition that extend beyond the aerospace industry and the Pacific Northwest. They represent such traditional manufacturing industries as steel, aluminum, diesel engines, farm equipment, and rail locomotives. They